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*Fig. 8. Kuan Yin, Deity of Compassion
Chinese, Late Sixth or Early Seventh Century. Height, 2.490 m.*

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Introduction to the Collection of Chinese Sculpture

I

A PART from utensils of bronze, jade, or pottery, the earliest examples of Chinese art known to us date from the first two centuries of our own era. They consist for the most part of pictorial designs, lightly carved or engraved in stone, and used to decorate either the small ante-vaults which were built before the graves of rich and important people, or the more monumental pillars which sometimes marked the approach to a group of such graves. In all probability the custom of erecting these funerary chambers originated about the beginning of the Later, or Eastern, Han Dynasty (A.D. 25-221), and almost certainly it was not confined to the inhabitants of any one locality; but the best known and most abundant remains of the kind are those belonging to certain tombs which date from the middle of the second century and are situated in the province of Shantung.*

The Museum is fortunate in being able to show three specimens of this early art (Figs. 1, 2, and 3), which, judged by their close resemblance in design to the tomb sculptures of the Wu family, and in technique to the somewhat earlier Hsiao-t'ang-shan reliefs, may be reasonably attributed to the Later Han period. In form they are thickish, rectangular slabs of gray limestone, such as might be conveniently used for sheathing, and on one of the large surfaces of each stone are cut, in lines so broad as to give to the designs the effect of countersunk reliefs, one or more scenes illustrating various legendary and historical events which seem to have no more intimate connection with one another or with the mournful precincts they once embellished than may be discerned in their common tendency to point a moral and adorn a tale.

Let us look, for example, at the uppermost register of the slab reproduced in Fig. 1. Beginning at the right, — in conformity with the Chinese practice of reading from right to left, — we see facing us a seated statue flanked on the right by two men and a woman, and on the left by three more men, the whole group representing a familiar scene in the life of Ting Lan, — a native of Ho-nei, Honan Province, and a paragon of filial piety. After the death of his mother, he carved a statue of her out of wood, and thenceforward lavished on the image he had made all the respect and care he could no longer bestow upon his mother. The story goes that on one occasion, when he was away from home, a neighbor came in to borrow something, and Ting's wife, being in doubt, consulted the statue, which responded by shaking its head; whereupon the neighbor flew into a great passion and struck

the offending image across the face. When Ting Lan returned he inquired the cause of the statue's grieved expression, and on learning what had happened, sought out his neighbor and administered a sound thrashing. This proceeding led to his being charged with assault; but when the officers came to arrest him, tears were seen to be flowing from the eyes of the statue, and it is, perhaps, at this poignant moment that our artist has striven to depict the devoted son, standing there beside his beloved image, while the emissaries of the law look on at that almost speaking proof of his filial piety. However this may be, we are told that Ting was acquitted of the charge against him, and that, moreover, the Emperor, in recognition of his virtue, caused his portrait to be painted.

Unfortunately the remaining figures of this register illustrate nothing so well-known as the story of Ting Lan. We see two men, a woman and two children; beyond these, a flying bird; below the bird, a man carrying a utensil of some sort over his shoulder and approaching a small pavilion under which another man,* evidently a person of importance, is kneeling; and facing the pavilion on either side, a kneeling man of inferior rank. The woman, to whom the larger of the two children is making a gesture as of entreaty or offering, holds a bow in her extended right hand, and from the position of her left hand, it seems probable that she has just released the arrow; but in spite of these various indications it has, so far, been impossible to identify the scene or scenes here represented.

In the second register, however, we are once more upon familiar ground. Beginning again at the right, we see a group of nine men gathered in respectful attitudes about the person of a young prince over whom one of them holds a small canopy, while a second kneels and apparently offers something to the boy. By comparing this scene with another representation† of the same subject, in which the identity of the more important figures is established by means of labels, we learn that the young prince is Ch'êng Wang‡ (B. C. 1115-1078), second king of the Chou Dynasty (B. C. 1122-255); the kneeling figure is the Duke of Chou, the boy's uncle and faithful regent, and the next standing figure on the left is the Duke of Lu, son of the Duke of Chou, and counsellor to the king. Concerning Ch'êng Wang and the Duke of Lu comparatively little is known, but the Duke of Chou is one of the shining lights of Chinese history. He was advisor to his elder brother, Wu Wang, founder of the Chou Dynasty, and afterward, in his capacity of regent during the minority of his nephew Ch'êng Wang, he became famous for his statesmanship, his high moral character, and

* These sculptures have been exhaustively studied and admirably published by Professor E. Chavannes in his *La sculpture sur pierre en Chine*. Paris, 1893; and his *Mission archéologique dans la Chine septentrionale*. Tome I, 1re partie. Paris, 1913.

* This figure is labelled "Po Yu," the name of a pious son whose title to fame will be told later on; but as the appearance of the man in the pavilion suggests in no way the story of Po Yu, it seems fair to assume that the label may be a later interpolation.

† Cf. Chavannes, *Mission*, Planche LXXVH, No. 147; and Tome I, 1re partie, p. 223.

‡ On this stone, however, he is wrongly labelled "Ch'i Wang"; but the label is probably a later interpolation.



Height, .682 m.; length, 1.815 m.

Fig. 1. Tomb-sculpture

Chinese, Second Century A. D.



Height, .445 m.; length, 1.055 m.

Fig. 2. Tomb-sculpture

Chinese, Second Century A. D.

Gifts of Dr. D. W. Ross and Messrs. G. M. Lane, Alexander Cochrane, and G. R. White



Chinese, Second Century A.D. Fig. 3. Tomb-sculpture Height, .312 m.; length, .880 m. Gift of Dr. D. W. Ross and Messrs. G. M. Lane, Alexander Cochrane, and G. R. White

his energetic devotion to the welfare of the people. Conspicuous among his virtues was his loyalty to his youthful sovereign, a point which is brought out in the scene before us; and indeed his personality seems to have been worthy of the veneration in which the Chinese have always held it.

The next group to the left in this same register illustrates a well-known anecdote of the fifth century B.C. Historians differ somewhat both as to the moral significance of the story and as to the details, but the general course of events is clear enough. Yen Ying, called also Yen Tzu, a man remarkable for his frugal habits, was attached in a ministerial capacity to the court of Duke Ching of the Ch'i State. He had as colleagues three "plain, blunt men" of a rather swashbuckling type, who might, he feared, hinder in some way his own official advancement. He therefore persuaded

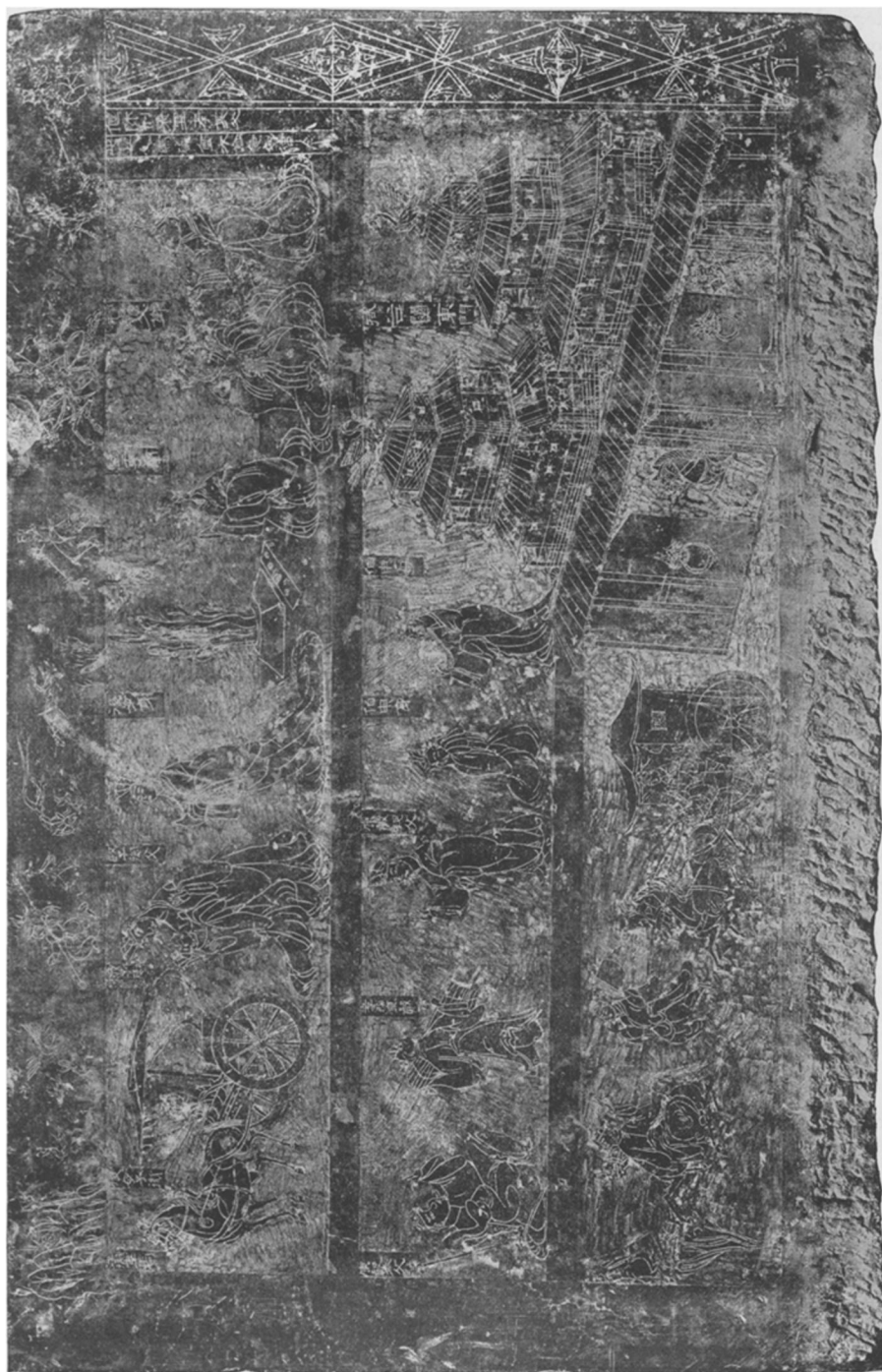
the Duke to offer *two* peaches as rewards of merit to the *three* braves, with the result that, out of jealousy as to which of them should forego the coveted reward, they quarreled and finally killed each other. "Thus it was," says one historian, "that three brave men died for the sake of two peaches." In the design before us the diminutive form of the wily Yen Ying is seen standing in front of the Duke, to whom he appears to be pointing out his three rivals, who are already gesticulating over the distribution of the two peaches.

The lowest register of this slab shows us, beginning at the right, a man, probably an official of the post-road, bowing toward a departing chariot labelled "Chariot of the Master of Writings," and occupied presumably by the Master himself and his charioteer. In front of the horse is an animal intended, perhaps, for a monkey. Then come two horsemen riding abreast, and in front of them another horseman standing across their path. The remainder of the register is practically a repetition, in composition at least, of the first part, except that the chariot is labelled "Chariot of the Police Chief" or "Magistrate,"* a flying bird is substituted for the monkey, and the group is completed by two courteous individuals, one of whom is offering an object resembling a shield to the advancing horsemen. Unfortunately the exact significance of this cavalcade is unknown to us, but it clearly represents some historical event which must have been familiar to the Chinese of the second century.

Turning now to Fig. 2, we behold a scene which, whatever its anecdotal value, may well claim our attention for other reasons. In the upper register a feast is in progress. At the right an acrobat and a dancer are performing,—the acrobat apparently juggling a little girl on his upturned feet,—while further to the left the host of the occasion and his servant are setting forth a variety of refreshments before several guests, of whom three are already seated and three more in process of being welcomed to the board by another servant. Below we are shown some of the work necessitated by the banquet going on above. Water is being drawn from a well; a food animal, strung up against the fulcrum of the well-sweep, is being butchered, to the evident interest of a bird perched on the overhanging counterbalance; birds are being taken from one receptacle, a pig is being laid out in another, and at the extreme left a man is seen sharpening a knife. Judging by analogy, this design must have been intended to illustrate the happenings of a particular occasion which we cannot now identify, but in any case we can hardly fail to be charmed by this sharply focused glimpse of pleasure and labor in ancient China.

In Fig. 3 is reproduced a stone on which is

* In the *Hou Han shu, pai kuan chih*, XXIV, page 2 b, this official is defined as one who has charge of bandits and thieves.



Height, .845 m.; length, 1.455 m.

Fig. 4. Tomb-sculpture
Lent by Dr. Denman W. Ross

Chinese, Late Second Century A. D.

incised a portion only of a much larger design* portraying a well-known episode in the life of Mu Wang,† fifth sovereign of the Chou Dynasty, who reigned from 1001 to 946 B. C. His career, shrouded in legend, seems to have consisted chiefly of journeys, one of which he is said to have made for the purpose of visiting Hsi Wang Mu, the Royal Lady of the West, in her abode among the clouds of the K'un-lun Mountains. This mythical lady, probably a Taoist creation, was supposed to possess an orchard of peach trees, whose fruit, ripening but once in three thousand years, conferred immortality upon those who were fortunate enough to eat of it. In the scene as depicted on our stone Mu Wang, or possibly his envoy,‡ is shown standing with two retainers before the entrance to the enchanted garden. Behind him is the three-horse chariot from which he has just alighted; at the left are the two horses of the retainers; and overhead float the human-headed clouds and birds of Hsi Wang Mu's domain.

Similar in purpose to the scenes just described, but different in technique, is the series of episodes depicted on the large black marble slab§ reproduced in Fig. 4. Evidently the drawing was first engraved in fine, shallow lines, and the background then roughened for the sake of contrast, without, however, producing a very marked effect.¶ Across the top of the stone is a hunting scene, showing various methods of prosecuting the chase — on foot, on horseback, with spears, bow and arrow, dogs and falcons; and at the extreme left it is possible to make out the head of a tiger protruding from a clump of trees. This scene appears to have little, if any, relation to the rest of the design, and may perhaps be regarded as an afterthought of the sculptor, such a supposition being borne out by the fact that the rather obscure inscription,|| which seems to refer to the hunters above, comes after the inscription referring to the first scene below instead of coming before it, as might be more naturally expected.

With these two inscriptions begins the uppermost of the three main registers into which the decorative scheme of the slab is divided. The right-hand one informs us that "Hsing Chü, a native of Yen-shih, behaved with great filial piety toward his father," and refers to the paragon of filial piety who served his toothless parent by chewing the old gentleman's food for him, — an unpleasant performance in which the father may

be thought to have displayed more fortitude than the son. As shown in this engraving, Hsing Chü is kneeling before his father, to whom he is making his dread offering with a pair of chop-sticks.

Further to the left is Ting Lan, with whom we are already acquainted, kneeling before the stump of a tree which, according to the accompanying label, is to be regarded as a statue of his revered mother.

The rest of this register is occupied by a scene which introduces us to Min Tzu-ch'ien, — a paragon of filial piety, — his father, his stepmother and her son. The story concerning these persons relates that death having carried off the mother of Min Tzu-ch'ien, his father married again and had two children by his second wife. One day when Tzu-ch'ien was driving with his father and half-brother, he let the reins fall; whereupon his father, wishing to find out the cause of such carelessness, discovered that the boy's hands were numb with cold and that he was quite insufficiently clad. Further investigation revealed the fact that the half-brother was, on the contrary, warmly dressed, a discovery which so enraged the father that he upbraided his second wife for her evident discrimination between the two children, and threatened to drive her from his bed and board. But at this crisis Min Tzu-ch'ien knelt before his father, as shown in our illustration, and intervened in his stepmother's behalf, saying: "As long as she stays, I alone shall be too thinly clothed; but if she goes, all your children will be cold." The father, however, remained silent — apparently less moved by his son's virtue than Chinese posterity has been.

The right-hand half of the middle register is occupied by a portion of the design belonging to the register below, but to the left of this we come upon two more scenes of filial piety. The first two figures are labelled respectively "Po Yü's mother" and "Po Yü himself," the latter individual having been a devoted son, who, when beaten by his mother, was heart-broken to perceive, from the weakness of her blows, that she was growing old and feeble. The remaining group of three figures is made up of Yüan Ku, his father and grandfather, and illustrates the following story.* Yüan Ku's parents had become tired of supporting his aged and infirm grandfather. They seem, indeed, to have hated the old man, and made up their minds to turn him out of house and home, a determination which Yüan Ku — then only fifteen years old — could by no means persuade them to relinquish. They therefore constructed a litter on which they transported the grandfather into the open country, where they abandoned him to his fate. Yüan Ku had, however, followed them; and when their heartless purpose was achieved, he picked up the litter and carried it home again. His father at once demanded to know why Yüan Ku should wish to save so dismal an object, and the boy replied:

*Quoted in the *Yuan chien lei han*, CCXLV, p. 1 b.

* Cf. Chavannes, *Mission*. Pl. LXVII, No. 131.

† According to the *Chin shih so*, Vol. III of the *Shih so*.

‡ The object which this figure holds is often seen in the hands of persons who are specified as envoys: cf. Chavannes, *Mission*. Pl. XLV, No. 76, and Pl. XLVI, No. 77.

§ This stone has already been published by Professor Chavannes in *Ars Asiatica*, Vol. II.

¶ In order to obtain a satisfactory photographic reproduction of the stone it was found necessary to fill up the lines of the design with powdered starch.

|| In regard to Professor Chavannes' tentative translation of this inscription it may be suggested that the seventh and eighth characters should be read *t'ai ts'ang*, "great storehouse," instead of *chi'uan shih*, "*nourriture de chien*." Cf. *Ars Asiatica*, Vol. II, p. 2.



Fig. 5. Buddhist Memorial Stela
Chinese, A. D. 554. Height, 2.118 m.; width, .819 m.

Lent by Hervey E. Wetzel

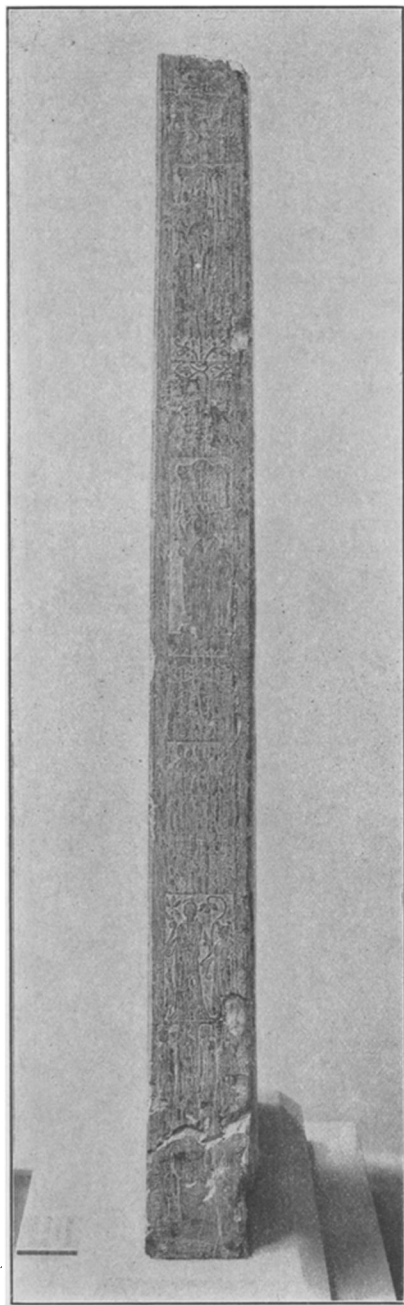


Fig. 6. Buddhist Memorial Stela (side view)
Chinese, A. D. 554
Height, 2.118 m.; thickness, .184 m.

Lent by Hervey E. Wetzel

"Because later on, when my own parents are grown old, I may be unable to make as good a litter as this;" whereupon his father, greatly moved, sought out the grandfather, brought him home and surrounded him with every care. In our engraving Yüan Ku, bearing the litter in his arms, is shown

standing between his father on the right and his grandfather on the left.

In the lowest register we see a large structure labelled "Eastern gate of the Hsien-ku pass,"* from which a procession of horses and chariots is issuing. This scene depicts an important episode in the life of Mêng Ch'ang-chün, a native of the Ch'i State, who in B. C. 299 became Minister to the Ch'in State, where it appears he got into difficulties which resulted in his being thrown into prison. Escaping from custody one night, he fled to the frontier where, at the Hsien-ku gate, his further progress was checked, owing to the fact that it was against the rules to open the portals before cock-crow. Mêng had among his followers, however, a man who was gifted with the power to imitate the crowing of a cock so perfectly that at his first cry the gates were thrown open and the fugitives were thus enabled to pass through to safety. The anecdote was doubtless intended to suggest that the subterfuge employed by Mêng redounded greatly to his credit, but in later times Wang An-shih, a writer of the eleventh century, scornfully remarks that "no true man of genius would condescend to associate with imitators of cocks."†

Perhaps the first impression received from the scenes with which these slabs are decorated is one of *naïveté*,—the sort of *naïveté* that might be expected in the early attempts of any people to express itself artistically. The simple and direct appeal of the events depicted; the little labels intended to make any misunderstanding impossible; the obvious technical crudities apparent in many of the designs,—all help to create this first impression. On the other hand it is noticeable that much of the drawing and composition of the groups is irreproachable, as for example in the procession of horses and chariots (Fig. 1), the dancer (Fig. 2), the equipage of Mu Wang (Fig. 3), or the scene between Min Tzu-ch'ien and his father (Fig. 4), in all of which there is a good deal of skillful characterization as well as great executive fluency. Furthermore, it is an interesting fact that if all the available slabs of the kind be examined, many of the groups carved upon them will be seen to be repeated again and again without marked variation, thus suggesting a paucity of inventive power on the part of the sculptors.

By the light of history, however, these somewhat contradictory indications seem to become more coherent. It must be borne in mind that at the time these stones were carved Chinese civilization already had a past history of nearly two thousand years, stretching back into a semi-legendary period of unknown duration. In the course of these centuries, and probably as early as the Shang Dynasty (B. C. 1766–1122), an advanced state of culture was attained, as well as a condition of social stability

* So identified by Professor Chavannes; cf. *Ars Asiatica*, Vol. II, page 7.

† Cf. Giles, *A Chinese Biographical Dictionary*, 1515.

which enabled the great Chou Dynasty (B.C. 1122-225) to endure for more than eight hundred years. During this latter period Lao Tzu and Confucius anticipated, and thus laid the foundations for, many future systems of speculative and moral philosophy; literature, being already regarded as venerable on account of its antiquity, flourished in all its forms; and painting seems to have been esteemed as a fine art.

Our knowledge of Chinese art in these earlier times, unlike our knowledge of similar manifestations in ancient Egypt and Greece, is gained almost entirely from literary sources, and it is worthy of remark that no writer who lived prior to the second century B. C. refers to the existence of sculpture in China. That the early Chinese probably produced very little, if any, sculpture in the round might, however, almost be inferred from the nature of their religious conceptions, which differed so widely from those current among their contemporaries of Western antiquity. Their observances consisted in the propitiation of their ancestors and the forces of nature by means of sacrifices; but these ceremonies were largely functions of the State, the Emperor alone sacrificing to Heaven and Earth. Their primitive religion was undoubtedly much affected by the metaphysics of Lao Tzu and the practical philosophy of Confucius; but they seem not to have felt the need of maintaining a priesthood or of worshipping anthropomorphic deities; and, being thus free to a great extent from what history has proved to be the strongest incentives to monumental expression, they were also content simply to enshrine in temples the tablets on which the names of the ancestors were written, and to let the art of painting fulfill the requirements of portraiture.*

In addition, however, to these general considerations regarding the state of Chinese culture at about the beginning of our era, there are certain indications which apply more particularly to the history of sculpture itself. Much the most significant of these is contained in a literary composition written in the first half of the second century A.D. by a young man, Wang Wên-k'ao, who visited the "Palace of Resplendent Brightness" and afterward described all that he had seen and admired there. This edifice had been built by the Prince of Lu who governed the Lu State from 154-129 B.C. It appears to have been a wooden structure richly ornamented with carvings of dragons, birds, beasts, and flowers in endless variety; but curiously enough it is not the description of these sculptures which throws the most direct light on the subject of our present investigation. In his account of the painted decorations, however, Wang says in part: "... here we see Imperial favorites and leaders of rebel-

lions; loyal subjects and pious sons; eminent men and virtuous women. Among the wise men and the fools, the conquerors and the conquered, there is not one omitted; and as the example of those who did evil will turn the world from evil, so the example of those who did good will encourage posterity in well-doing." When these sentences were written the paintings they described were already three hundred years old, and the earliest among the Shantung tomb-sculptures now known to us were comparatively new; yet it would be difficult to find a better summing up, not only of the scenes depicted upon our stones, but also of the motives which inspired them.

Thus all the available evidence seems to show that in the tomb-sculptures of the second century A.D. we are confronted with an art which, though primitive enough in execution, was in other respects decadent rather than archaic,—the product of highly civilized and sophisticated people, who, newly stimulated, perhaps, by a desire to decorate their tombs, and seeking therefor a medium of expression which could withstand exposure to the weather, took the simplest possible means of transferring to stone the ideas and scenes with which they had long been familiar both in literature and in painting. That this work was entrusted to artisans rather than to artists may be inferred from the lack of originality shown in the frequent repetition of the same scenes and in the manner of treatment which, moreover, is characteristic rather of the painter than of the sculptor. Indeed we seem to be justified in concluding that the chief interest of these slabs lies not so much in their relation to sculpture as in the indications they give of what early Chinese painting must have been.

II

Whatever may be the value of the foregoing inferences in regard to the Shantung tomb-sculptures, there can be little doubt that the sculptures themselves were the product of intellectual and artistic impulses which were purely Chinese in origin and development. As reminders of approved moralities they appealed to feelings that already were,—and long continued to be,—deeply rooted in the social consciousness of the Chinese race; but as sculpture they represented a comparatively feeble growth that was, for a time at least, swept away by the tide of Buddhist art that overflowed the boundaries of India and flooded China during the early centuries of our era.*

The official entry of Buddhism into China is dated in the year 67 A.D., when the envoys sent to India by Ming Ti (A.D. 58-76), second Emperor of the Later Han Dynasty, returned to their native land, bringing with them the sacred books of the new religion; but there is every reason to believe that rumors of the Buddha's teachings

* Ancestor-worship may well have brought the ancient Chinese very close to the practice of idolatry, but it is worth noticing in this connection that as late as the Eastern Han Dynasty Ting Lan is shown to be quite evidently satisfied with a tree-stump in lieu of a more realistic representation of his mother (cf. Fig. 4).

* Reminiscences of the technique shown in Figs. 1, 2, and 3 appear, however, in later times; and the method of engraving illustrated in Fig. 4 was subsequently brought to a state of great perfection.

had reached the Middle Kingdom during the Former Han Dynasty (B. C. 206 – A. D. 25), although the influence of Buddhist art does not seem to have made itself generally felt before the fourth century A. D. From this time on, however, both the religion and its art flourished exceedingly and almost without interruption, reaching their zenith at about the middle of the ninth century, when China could boast of more than forty-five thousand Buddhist establishments carried on within the boundaries of the empire by over two hundred and fifty thousand ecclesiastics.

On no form of artistic expression did Buddhism exert a more overwhelming influence than on sculpture, and, indeed, it is easy to understand what a tremendous impression the already highly developed and magnificent sculpture of India must have produced on the minds of the Chinese, who, as we have seen, had never felt impelled to express themselves on a monumental scale.* Whether their earliest attempts under the Buddhist influence took the form of relief carving or of sculpture in the round, we cannot now determine; but it may be well to examine first the large memorial stela† reproduced in Figs. 5 and 6, for though this monument is of later date than the statue illustrated in Fig. 7, it is more nearly related in technique to the tomb-sculptures we have already studied.

The lowest register of the stela is occupied by inscriptions, one of which informs us that this memorial was erected in the year 554, under the great Wei dynasty,‡ as a means of securing the happiness and welfare of the donors, their ancestors, their posterity, their relatives and friends, the Emperor in particular and the Chinese people in general.§ Above, two of the donors, — each accompanied by a horse and attendants, — are shown standing on either side of a square panel, within which are four large seal characters probably correctly rendered as *Hsi kuo tsao hsiang*, or "Image made by the Western nation,"|| and serving as a sort of title for the monument. This panel is surmounted by a large reliquary which rises between the figures of two more donors, and is flanked at the top by kneeling worshippers and lions.

In the centre of the next register above, we see, beneath an ornamental lotus canopy supported on slender columns, the *Buddha* Sakya-muni seated between his two great disciples, Ananda on the left and Maha-Kasyapa on the right; and on either side of this group are two figures representing a Padma-pani and a Vajra-pani, protectors of the Buddhist faith. Overhead, and symmetrically embraced within the design of the canopy, are two kneeling figures; and behind each of these is a

sitting figure of a demon; the whole forming a narrow band of decoration which could hardly be surpassed in the harmony of its composition. Above this band the well-known episode* of the meeting between Sakya-muni and Prabhuta-ratna is shown. The two *Buddhas* are seated together under a hanging canopy, and beside them stand the two *Bodhisattvas*, Bhaisajya-raja and Avalokitesvara. At the extreme left of the register is a figure sitting under a tree, — doubtless intended to represent Sakya-muni while still a prince meditating in his garden; and at the extreme right we see him represented as a recluse sitting in a cave, before he attained to Buddhahood. Between this register and the one above, is another narrow band in which two Buddhist devotees are shown kneeling on either side of a reliquary and each protected from evil influences by a guardian of the faith who brandishes his *vajra*, or thunderbolt, at a beast crouching before him.

The uppermost register is, unfortunately, badly broken, but there is enough left to indicate the purport of the original scene. The story† illustrated is probably that of the *Bodhisattva* Bhaisajya-raja, who, after his incarnation as the son of King Vimaladatta, preached a sermon before his father and then ascended to heaven mounted on a throne in which were set the seven kinds of jewels. In this representation, the larger figure to the left of the centre would be Vimaladatta, as is indicated by the ideograph for "king" which is inscribed behind him; and the knees resting on the low dais to the right would belong to the *Bodhisattva*.

The back and edges of this stone, as may be seen in Fig. 6, are completely covered with delicately carved low reliefs showing the donors of the memorial, to the number of about two hundred, interspersed with inscriptions, similar to those on the face of the stone, setting forth the identity of each individual, and, in many cases, the portion of the carving which he contributed.

The imaginative and executive powers displayed in this stela are, of course, immeasurably in advance of anything we can see in the sculptures of the second century; and although the scenes themselves, as well as the high relief in which many of them are carved, were largely the result of foreign influences, they seem to be quite free from the evidences of slavish imitation and lack of invention which are so prominent in the earlier sculptures of purely Chinese origin.‡ Here, surely, we are confronted with an art in the full flower of its inspiration; and indeed it is probable that this great stela is, on the whole, the most important piece of Buddhist sculpture that has as yet come out of China.

It seems obvious, however, that such a masterpiece

* A very few examples of sculpture in the round, in the shape of stone lions, are found associated with the mortuary sculptures of Shantung.

† Published in detail by Chavannes in *Ars Asiatica*, Volume II.

‡ The Western Wei dynasty, which lasted only twenty-two years, from 535–557 A. D.

§ For details concerning the date and inscriptions, cf. Chavannes, op. cit. p. 20 ff.

|| Professor Chavannes, op. cit. p. 25, suggests *Fo t'u tsao hsiang*, or "Image faite par des disciples du Buddha," — a more ingenious reading than the one given above, but perhaps less satisfactory.

* Related in the *Sad-dharma-pundarika* (cf. *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXI), Chap. XI.

† *Ibid.*, Chap. XXII.

‡ It is interesting to notice that the figures of the Chinese donors are executed in a manner reminiscent of the Shantung tomb-sculptures, while those of the Buddhist deities are carved in the high relief characteristic of Indian sculpture.



*Fig. 7. Kuan Yin, Deity of Compassion
Chinese, Early Fifth Century. Height, 1.965 m.*

Given by Dr. Denman W. Ross

In memory of Okakura-Kakuzo, late Curator of Chinese and Japanese Art at the Museum

must be the outcome of a significant past and must foreshadow an interesting future, as may be verified in this instance by an examination of the two heroic statues of Kuan Yin (Avalokitesvara), deity of compassion, reproduced in Figs. 7, 8, and 9; the one* (Fig. 7), a product of the early fifth century, from Honan province; the other (Figs. 8 and 9), of the late sixth or early seventh century, from the province of Shansi.

The first statue represents the deity, probably in a feminine manifestation,† with her right hand raised as though in benediction. Owing partly to the loss of the left hand we cannot be sure of the precise form in which the artist intended his Kuan Yin to appear, but it is evident that she originally sat between other figures which are, perhaps, still extant in the now unknown temple from which she was taken. In any case, there can be no doubt that the technique of the statue is truly archaic; but it is equally certain that in purity of inspiration and sincerity of expression the artist has achieved a result more striking in its appeal than many another produced in later times by more skillful hands.

In Figs. 8 and 9 we see the same deity, again in feminine form, standing on a lotus pedestal, guarded by four lions. She wears an elaborate headdress in which a tiny figure of her Lord, Amita Buddha, is set; her body is clothed in flowing drapery, over which a profusion of looped-up chains and other pendant ornaments are hung; thin veils float downward from her jewelled arms, and in her left hand she carries a cluster of lotus buds. Everywhere, but especially on the back of the figure, there still remains abundant evidence that her flesh, as well as the ornaments she wears, was once overlaid with gold, while her garments and the pedestal on which she stands were brilliant with many colors; but even now, when so much of her glory has vanished, she exists for us as one of the most splendid and perfect specimens of Chinese Buddhist sculpture that can be seen to-day. This very quality of splendor, however, is not in itself wholly reassuring, and it seems inevitable that such elaboration of graceful detail, such facility and perfection of technique must, in the last analysis, entail a certain measure of spiritual attenuation. In the placid, smiling face of the goddess, her full, round arms, her rather sensual hands and general sumptuousness of person, there are many suggestions of a luxurious environment in which the simple austerities of true religious and artistic inspiration could not long survive, and it may well be that in this noble statue of Kuan Yin the art which we have been following from its source reached a higher level than in later centuries it was able to maintain.

J. E. L.

(To be continued)

* Already published in the Museum Bulletin for December, 1913.

† Avalokitesvara was originally an Indian male deity; but as time went on, and Buddhism passed from country to country, he came to be endowed with feminine attributes and was often represented as a woman.

Lecture Courses, 1915-1916

Artistic Anatomy. Philip L. Hale. Twenty-four lectures, on Tuesdays and Fridays, 2-4, beginning October 8. (Fee, \$15.)

Perspective. Anson K. Cross. Fifteen lectures, on Mondays, 2-4, beginning January 10, 1916.

History of Design. Henry Hunt Clark. (University Extension Course.) Thirty lectures, on Fridays, 3.30, beginning October 8. (Fee, \$10.)

Evolution of Painting. Huger Elliott. Fifteen lectures, on Thursdays, 3.30, beginning February 3, 1916. (Fee, \$5.)

Elements of Architecture for Interior Decorators. Huger Elliott. Thirty lectures, on Mondays and Thursdays, 3.30, beginning October 7. (Fee, \$10.)

A Survey of the Industrial Arts. Huger Elliott. Thirty lectures, on Tuesdays, 9 A. M., beginning October 5. (Fee, \$10.)

Artistic Standards Concerning Objects in Daily Use. Huger Elliott. Twelve lectures, on Saturdays, 11 A. M., beginning January 8, 1916. (Fee, \$5.)

Observation of Pictures. Miss Alicia M. Keyes. Ten lectures, on Saturdays, 10.30, beginning October 16. (Fee, \$5.)

The list of Thursday Conferences will be announced in the Bulletin for October.

Registry of Local Art

Works of Art Owned by the City of Boston

THE Report of the Art Commission for the year ending January 31, 1915, will contain a fifth list of City-owned works of art prepared by the Museum at the request of the Commission. This list completes to date the inventory begun in 1911 by a list of public monuments, and continued in following years by lists of pictures, of busts and bas-reliefs and of memorial tablets and inscriptions. That of this year includes a number of objects outside the scope of the previous lists, as well as others acquired or erected since the work of inventorying began.

Among earlier works the fountain on the Park Street Mall of the Common, given to the City in 1867 by Gardner Brewer, is said to be a bronze copy of a fountain by the French sculptor, Paul Liénard. The design is one of much refinement. The Johnson Memorial Fountain erected in 1901 from designs by Mr. Guy Lowell forms a monumental gateway to the Fenway from Westland Avenue. A number of smaller fountains entitled to rank as works of art are also owned by the City.

The list of objects acquired or erected within the past few years includes the marble and granite bandstand on the Common, built in 1912 from